

Safety On The Road

Walk Around Before You Drive!

Before you hit the highway, you need to know your vehicle is in good condition.

A vehicle inspection before each trip or at the start of each driving shift.

It is your responsibility to know the condition of your vehicle and report any faulty condition for repair.

You must also operate the vehicle within the limits of its mechanical condition, so it is important to know your vehicle well.

Your exact checklist will depend on the type of vehicle, the type of driving, cargo, legal requirements and company policies. A quick walk-around may be adequate for a passenger vehicle, while an extensive check will be needed for large transport vehicles. Besides checking the condition of the vehicle itself, you will be looking for obstacles and hazards in the environment, such as objects you could accidentally strike by backing up.

Here are some points to check before your trip:

- Brake adjustment, linings and drums, brake fluid
- Fuel level
- Fan belts
- Engine hoses
- Coolant level

- Steering
- Suspension system
- Battery fluid level
- Tire pressure and tread
- Oil level
- Windshield wipers
- Windshield washer fluid
- Windows
- Mirrors
- Horn
- Gauges
- Warning buzzers
- Saddle tanks
- Head lights, tail lights, signal lights, brake lights and clearance lights
- Warning flashers
- License plates
- Rear doors
- Fifth wheel
- Exhaust system
- Wheels, axles, lugs and nuts
- Emergency tools
- Flares, flags and other warning devices
- Fire extinguisher
- Spare tire
- First aid kit
- Maps

Also look under your vehicle for spilled fuel, brake fluid, oil or water.

Safety devices such as the brakes, gauges, horn and windshield wipers should be checked with the engine running. Adjust the seat, seatbelt and mirrors before setting the vehicle in motion.

You must be aware of your cargo and of any special protective measures or safety devices required. Understand the hazards associated with your load, the precautions required to protect yourself and others, and the laws regulating transportation of this cargo.

The load must be within limits of weight, length and width. It must be properly secured. Look for loose chains, tarpaulins or racks. Look for unsecured doors or tailgates. Don't forget the paperwork accompanying the load.

Before starting out from a parking spot, do a circle of the vehicle facing the traffic. Look for pedestrians, other vehicles and objects you might strike if you attempted to move. The placement of fluorescent safety cones around the vehicle will encourage the driver to do a circle check because they must be picked up. These cones also make the vehicle more visible to other traffic, and can block traffic for safer backing.

Do a quick walk-around of your vehicle each time you stop. If a serious problem develops, call in for instructions. Make a note of minor problems on your post-trip report so they can be corrected before the next run.

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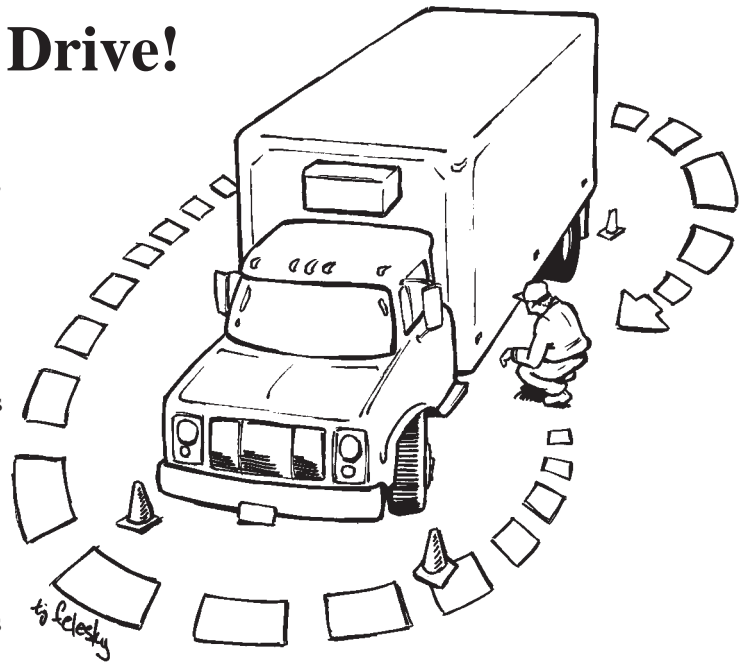
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